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Greetings from the North Carolina Muscadine Growers,

It's almost harvest time for North Carolina's official state fruit! Fresh Muscadines are a tasty treat that offer excellent benefits to the body. They have, by far, the highest levels of antioxidants of any grape. Studies show that the main antioxidants, ellagic acid and resveratrol, can play a key role in preventing cancer, heart disease and high cholesterol.

In this media kit are collateral materials for you to peruse and learn all about Muscadines, their distinguished history in North Carolina and the many fine qualities they possess. There is information on Pick-Your-Own vineyards and some traditional North Carolina Muscadine recipes are included for you to prepare and enjoy.

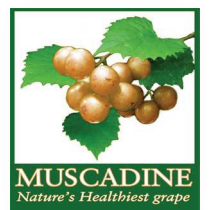
Please consider featuring delicious North Carolina Muscadines to educate, enlighten and encourage readers to make "Nature's healthiest grape" a part of their diet while they are available at stores, farmers' markets and roadside stands. For questions about North Carolina Muscadines, please call John Snipes at the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services at 919 733 7887 x 236.

We would like everyone feeling "Muscadine fine" while these grapes are in season!

Thank you for reviewing the enclosed materials. We hope you will find them useful.

Wishing you good health,

The North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
The North Carolina Muscadine Grape Association



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
AUGUST 2007**

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It's Muscadine time!

RALEIGH –Add some exotic flavor to your summertime menu: the North Carolina Muscadine grape. Tickle your taste buds with fresh grapes from a local market or roadside stand. Surprise your dinner guests with a glass of refreshing Muscadine wine or a dessert of grape hull pie.

The Muscadine, now widely cultivated on North Carolina farms, is native to the Southern United States. The harvest season for them in North Carolina generally peaks from late August through September, bringing a sweet conclusion to summer.

“Research points to a variety of health benefits associated with this grape,” said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. “That’s great news for those of us who love fresh, North Carolina Muscadines and eagerly await their arrival.”

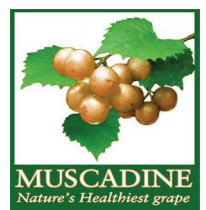
Early North Carolina settlers found the “Mother Vine” of this secret treasure on Roanoke Island. It was home to the Scuppernong variety, large bronze grapes with thick skins. They were growing in loose clusters of eight to 10 grapes and averaging about 1½ inches in size, encasing rich antioxidants in their outer cover. When ripe, the Scuppernong exudes a sweet and distinctly musky taste. The grapes create a delectable flavor in wines popular throughout the South.

Confusion exists about the difference between the Scuppernong and the Muscadine. A popular saying is, “*All Scuppernongs are Muscadines, but not all Muscadines are Scuppernongs.*” There are now numerous varieties of Muscadines for fresh eating and other products. They tend to vary in appearance, depending on the type, and range in hue from bronze to black. So, to be accurate, it is better to use the term Muscadine when the species is unknown.

The Scuppernong was the first grape cultivated in America and the history of this twisted vine dates back 400 years ago when Florentine navigator Giovanni de Verrazzano first recorded its existence in 1524. Today the Scuppernong and its kin enjoy popularity in North Carolina grocery stores, roadside stands and farmers’ markets, which take pride in promoting North Carolina offerings. Several Muscadine vineyards sell their fresh grapes but also showcase their wines at festivals throughout the year.

Many find Muscadines good for making jams, jellies or any dish calling for grapes. Others find them to be a healthy addition to their diets. Not only are these grapes delicious and versatile, but they also contain high levels of antioxidants and significant amounts of resveratrol, which is helpful in lowering LDL (bad) cholesterol and fighting heart disease. In fact, Muscadines have been touted by the medical community as a formidable ally against carcinogenic agents, as well. These are fine attributes for the official state fruit of North Carolina and what some proclaim “Nature’s healthiest grape.”

If your interest is now piqued to try this unusual and healthy North Carolina nutritional gem, a list of local sources can be found by visiting: <http://www.ncfarmfresh.com> or call 919 733-7887 ext. 236 for a free brochure.



www.ncmuscadine.org



North Carolina Muscadine Fact Sheet

1 The legacy of North Carolina's history is deeply rooted in its agricultural spirit. Out of the many natural wonders to sprout in North Carolina, none has a richer past or offers a more promising future than the Muscadine grape.

2 Muscadine history extends back to 1524 in North Carolina's Cape Fear River Valley, when French explorer Giovanni de Verrazzano discovered the Scuppernong grape, a bronze variety of Muscadine. Recorded as "The Big White Grape," the Scuppernong was the first grape to be cultivated in the U.S. and comes from the oldest vine in our nation, North Carolina's 400-year-old Mother Vine.

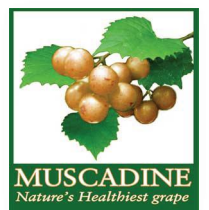
3 All Muscadine varieties range from bronze to dark purple to black in color. Although Scuppernong is only one of the many Muscadine cultivars, the variety is so popular that the name is often used incorrectly to describe other popular bronze types, like Carlos and Magnolia.

4 Regardless of color and variety, all Muscadines are relatively resistant to pests and disease and thrive in hot weather. The fruit are larger than the typical grape and do not grow in the traditional bunches. Characterized by a thick skin on the outside, the grape's juicy pulp is gelatinous, with a sweet, musky flavor.

5 Local Muscadine planting has been on the rise due to an increase in consumer demand for the fresh grape and wine. Native North Carolinians enjoy the fruit straight from the vine by biting a small hole into the skin and sucking the pulp and juice so it bursts into their mouths. Some people spit out the seeds, others simply swallow them. Although Muscadines are mostly eaten fresh, there has been a long Southern tradition of preparing the grapes in foods like pie, juice, jelly and wine.

6 Not only are Muscadines increasing in popularity for their pleasing taste, but the grapes are also emerging as a nutritional sensation. As one of the richest sources of antioxidants found in nature, Muscadines have an antioxidant level 40 times higher than any other grape. Studies show that the main antioxidants, ellagic acid and resveratrol, can play a key role in preventing cancer, heart disease and high cholesterol, as well as treating ailments like arthritis, topical burns and the flu.

7 Celebrate North Carolina's rich heritage and take part in the sweet experience of Muscadines by visiting one of the many vineyards located throughout our state. Once you discover what you have been missing, you are sure to join in the excitement surrounding our state's natural wonder, Muscadines.





Traditional North Carolina Muscadine Recipes

North Carolina Muscadine Grape Hull Pie

5½ cups muscadine grapes, rinsed
1 cup sugar
pastry for 2-crust pie

1½ Tbs. lemon juice
1 Tbs. Grated orange rind

2 Tbs. margarine
¼ cup flour

Separate pulp from skins. Set skins aside. Boil pulp until seeds loosen, then press through a sieve to separate pulp from seeds. Cook pulp with skins until tender. Then add sugar, flour, lemon juice and orange rind. Mix well. Put in pastry-lined 9-inch pie plate. Top with margarine. Add top pastry. Seal edges and slit top. Bake at 400 degrees about 40 minutes.

North Carolina Muscadine “Dump Cake”

½ stick margarine
¾ cup self-rising flour

½ cup milk
½ cup sugar

1 cup prepared grapes

To prepare grapes, remove pulp; cook pulp until seeds loosen, then press through sieve to remove seeds. Add pulp to skins and cook until tender. Add sugar to taste, some grated lemon peel and a sprinkle of apple pie spice. Melt butter in glass pie plate. Mix flour, sugar and milk in another bowl. Pour flour mixture over butter. Carefully pour prepared grapes over the top. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Do not open oven until baking time is up. Cake should be brown on top. Yield: 8 servings.

Mulled North Carolina Muscadine Cider

1 quart muscadine grape juice
1 lemon, sliced

2 (4-inch) sticks cinnamon
1 orange, sliced

Dash of ground allspice

Combine all ingredients in a saucepan. Bring to a boil; reduce heat, and simmer 5 minutes. Serve warm. Yield: 8 half-cup servings.

North Carolina Scuppernong Ice Cream

3 cups sugar
2 cups whipping cream

½ cup lemon juice
1 quart light cream

2 cups chilled scuppernong juice

Combine sugar, whipping cream and light cream in a large mixing bowl; beat on medium speed of electric mixer 1 minute or until sugar dissolves. Add juices and beat well. Pour mixture into 1-gallon size freezer can. Freeze according to manufacturer's directions.

